

RESOLUTION NO. 20220915-052

WHEREAS, the City seeks to enhance public welfare, protect public safety, and promote safety for all residents by declaring that freedom from human trafficking is a fundamental human right; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of State defines human trafficking as the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery; and

WHEREAS, according to the United States Department of Homeland Security, human trafficking is one of the fastest-growing criminal industries in the world; and

WHEREAS, after drug dealing, human trafficking is tied with the illegal arms industry as the second largest criminal industry in the world today and is fueled in large part by the lucrative business of trafficking individuals for commercial sexual exploitation; and

WHEREAS, the United Nations General Assembly and the Human Rights Council have repeatedly affirmed that “human trafficking violates and impairs fundamental human rights;” and

WHEREAS, some major factors that contribute to people becoming human trafficking victims are poverty, racism, gender inequality, addictions, mental illness, parental incarceration, foster care, childhood trauma, co-dependency, history of abuse, and substance abuse; and

WHEREAS, it is often the case that migrants are victims of indebted servitude which is a form of human trafficking; and

WHEREAS, victims of extreme homelessness are sometimes targeted, trafficked, and forced into survival sex in order not to be robbed, violently assaulted, or killed; and

WHEREAS, traffickers exploit approximately \$600 million per year from victims of labor trafficking in Texas in the most at-risk industries and economic sectors, including migrant farm workers, construction workers, kitchen workers in restaurants, and landscaping service workers; and

WHEREAS, sex trafficking is a subcategory of commercial sexual exploitation, in which an individual uses different methods to control another individual to force or coerce them into providing sexual services for commercial gain; and

WHEREAS, victims of trafficking can be adults and minors; and

WHEREAS, there are many types of trafficking that can occur including sexual exploitation, labor exploitation, forced criminality, organ harvesting, and domestic servitude; and

WHEREAS, suicide rates among youth, ideation, and behavior, are much higher among those who have experienced a form of trafficking; and

WHEREAS, according to The University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work, researchers found that there are an estimated 313,000 victims of human trafficking in Texas, approximately 79,000 minors and youths are victims of sex trafficking and approximately 234,000 workers in Texas who are victims of labor trafficking; and

WHEREAS, Texas ranks second only to California in the number of human trafficking arrests; and

WHEREAS, these types of trafficking are a violation of fundamental human rights; and

WHEREAS, on March 15, 2015, Council passed Resolution No. 20151015-033, stating that (1) the City recognizes human trafficking is a human rights concern impacting Austin residents, businesses, and communities; (2) the City declares that freedom from human trafficking is a fundamental human right; and (3) the City promotes these principles and values through its policies, and continues to secure this human right on behalf of its residents; and

WHEREAS, the City is committed to ensuring there is transparency in our own business and in our approach to tackling human trafficking through our procurement and Request For Proposal process; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The City Council supports the fight to end human trafficking and condemns the ongoing exploitation and profit from human trafficking.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,

The City Council directs the City Manager to provide appropriate resources to vendors who do business with the City and encourage training to ensure vendors have the skills to recognize indicators of individuals experiencing homelessness at risk of human trafficking.

This should include, but not be limited to:

- Providing educational materials describing indicators of human exploitation and trafficking to be displayed by non-profits or vendors that enter contracts with the City related to homelessness or housing.
- Providing appropriate resources to ensure vendors who enter into contracts with the City have the skills to safely report suspicious activity to the right authorities, including those from agencies such as the National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.
- Working with the Austin Chamber of Commerce to encourage local business participation.
- Supporting victims of human trafficking through referrals to available support services.
- Displaying educational materials describing indicators of human exploitation and trafficking in permanent supportive housing, bridge shelters, or overnight shelters owned or operated in the City, and all City buildings.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,

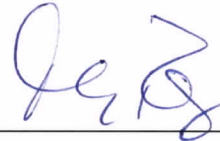
The City hereby encourages the Texas legislature and broader community to support enabling legislation to end human trafficking and directs the City Manager to amend the City's State and Federal Legislative Agendas to support legislation to end human trafficking, including efforts to prevent and recognize human trafficking and to provide support for victims of human trafficking.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to send copies of this resolution to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House, the Austin state and federal delegations, and to the President of the United States.

ADOPTED: September 15, 2022

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Myrna Rios', is written over a horizontal line.

Myrna Rios
City Clerk